

## 2014 Top-to-Bottom List and Priority, Focus, and Reward Designations in Brief

The Top-to-Bottom List (TTB) is a performance ranking of all eligible schools from the top (99<sup>th</sup> percentile) to the bottom (0<sup>th</sup> percentile). First introduced in 2012, the ranking is based on achievement, improvement, and within-school achievement gaps.<sup>1</sup> All non-private schools in the state with at least 30 Full Academic Year (FAY) students in at least two tested subjects for two consecutive years are eligible to be ranked on the TTB List. The MDE also designates groups of schools in order to provide appropriate support:

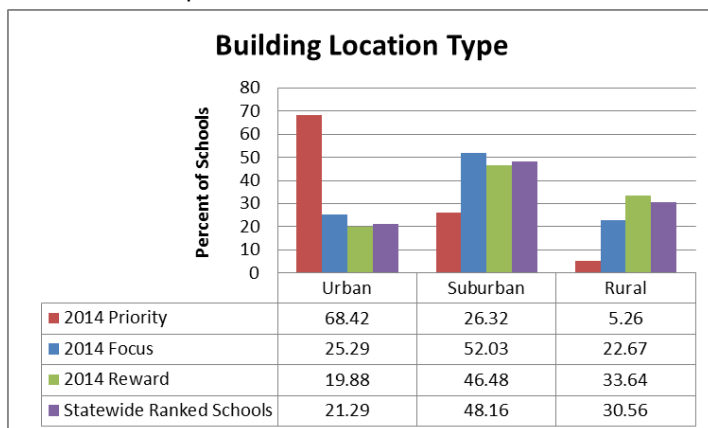
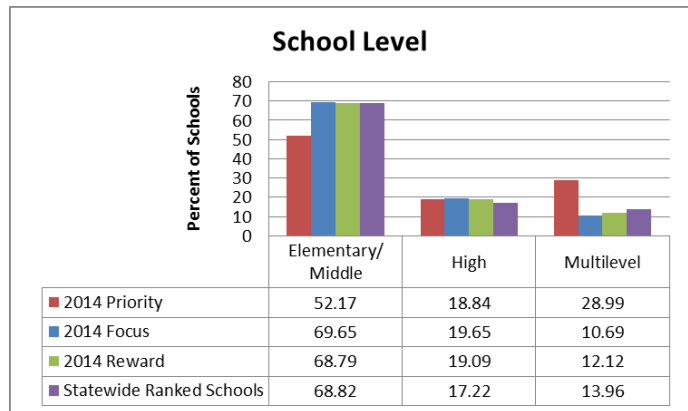
- **Priority Schools** are the bottom five percent of schools
- **Focus Schools** are schools with the largest within-school gap in achievement between the top 30% and bottom 30% of students.
- **Reward Schools** are schools showing the highest improvement, highest performance, and schools determined to be “Beating the Odds.”

This brief discusses characteristics of the 2014 TTB List.

### Characteristics of the 2014 TTB List

- 2,757 schools were eligible for the 2014 TTB List and received a percentile rank. Of these schools, 138 were designated Priority Schools, 346 were designated Focus Schools, and 330 were designated Reward Schools.

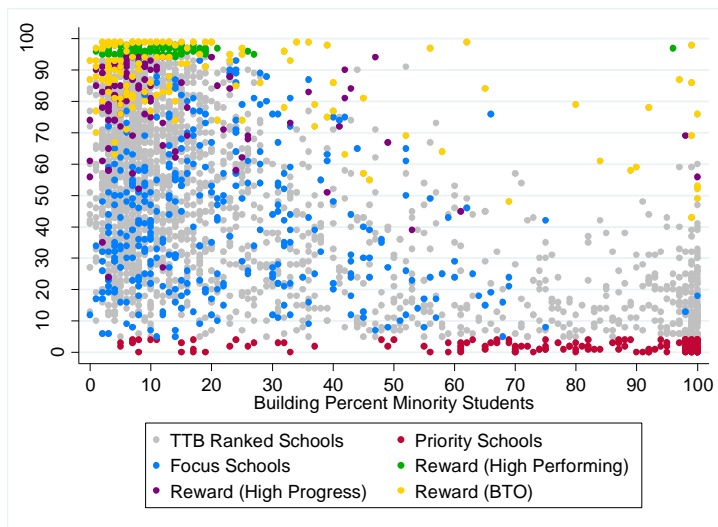
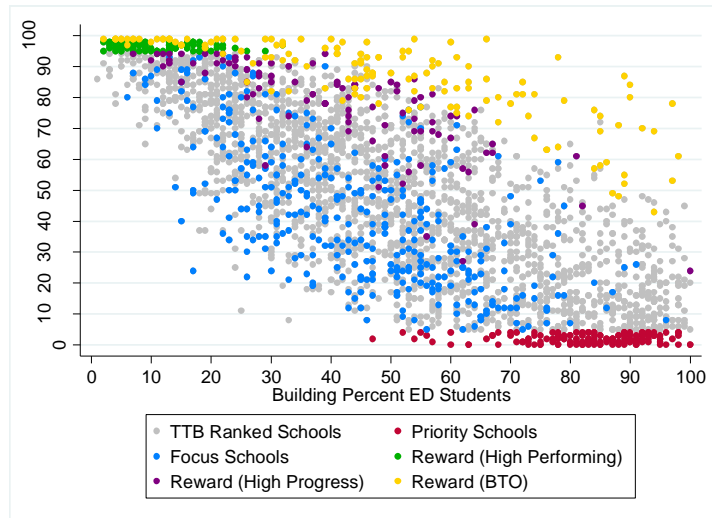
- Approximately 69% of all ranked schools are elementary or middle schools, 17% are high schools, and 14% are multilevel schools. Schools on Focus and Reward Lists proportionately represent the statewide distribution of schools. In contrast, elementary or middle schools are underrepresented (52%) and multilevel schools are overrepresented (29%) on the Priority List compared to the statewide distribution.



- Nearly half of all ranked schools are located in suburban areas. Approximately 31% of schools are in rural locations, and 21% of schools are found in urban areas. Priority schools are disproportionately located in urban areas, while the distribution of Focus and Reward schools is more similar to the distribution of all ranked schools.

<sup>1</sup> Graduation rate is also factored in to the ranking for high schools.

- The mean student enrollment in ranked schools is 297 students. On average, Focus schools have more students (333 students), while Priority and Reward schools have slightly fewer students (252 students and 257 students, respectively).
- Schools with lower proportions of economically disadvantaged students tend to rank higher on the TTB List, though there is quite a bit of variance to this relationship. The graph to the right displays the relationship between economic disadvantage status and TTB rank.
- The mean percentage of minority<sup>2</sup> students in all ranked schools is 27%. On average, Focus and Reward Schools have smaller than average minority student bodies (22% and 17%, respectively), while Priority Schools have higher than average proportions of minority students (75%). The graph below displays the relationship between a school's proportion of minority students and its TTB rank.



<sup>2</sup> "Minority" includes all ESEA-designated racial/ethnic subgroups: black, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, and multiracial.